

4. HABITS OF MOUSE DEER

My son and I were out swimming in the river in the jungle only ten minutes walk from our bungalow. We had got too cold so were standing on a rock ledge warming ourselves in the sun and throwing sticks for our dog into the pool below. A little earlier my son had seen some small animal which he was not able to identify, swimming to escape the attentions of a group of jungle tribesmen, Panniars, and which had taken to the undergrowth by the river. As we threw a stick for our dog to retrieve to our horror it landed right beside

the same small animal which I identified as a Mouse Deer, which was swimming to recross the river, this then dived and swam underwater. In fact, it remained submerged for so long that we thought it had drowned, until we spotted it as it emerged beside a rock in the pool. There it waited until the coast was clear then drifted down with the ripples in the cascade, looking like a bit of rotten wood until it was able to reach the other side and land in the undergrowth and make good its escape.

SENTINEL ROCK ESTATE,
VELLARMALA-673 578,
S. WYNAAD,
KERALA,
March 22, 1977.

(MRS.) J. A. LAWRENCE

5. THE COOT *FULICA ATRA* LINNAEUS NESTING NEAR
NASIK, MAHARASHTRA

While spending a long weekend at Nasik, I and my host Mr. J. D. Panday visited the small Khambhala village jheel a few miles out of Nasik on the Trimbak road. The embankment was totally hidden by rank monsoon vegetation and castor shrubs. On the water we saw several Coots and Little Grebes.

In the middle of the jheel among the floating aquatic vegetation we noted several mounds which we presumed were floating nests of grebes until on one mound we saw three full-grown coots but with very light underparts and an adult feverishly swimming to and fro adding more material to the mound. To the left of this nest I noticed a pair of coots with three small reddish chicks perhaps hatched

shortly before. They could have, at a casual glance, been passed over as Little Grebes. A third pair with young in tow was noticed further away. The light was favourable from behind us and we also were able to compare the very young chicks with the grebes nearby and the fully fledged young with their lighter underparts contrasting with the black of the adults.

Though very common during the winter months throughout the subcontinent it is not that one comes commonly across nesting Coots and its exact distribution as a regular nesting bird needs to be determined over much of the country.

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
HORNBILL HOUSE,
SHAHID BHAGAT SINGH ROAD,
BOMBAY-400 023,
January 6, 1977.

LAVKUMAR KHACHER